You might be a soldier if...

- You can explain the Gettysburg battlefield better than directions to your house
- CNN is your favorite program
- Your 2-year-old calls everyone in BDUs "Daddy."
- You ruin the movie for everyone around you by pointing out the unrealistic military scenes
- You always back into parking spaces
- Your vacation atlas always has two routes marked

Individual Learning Variables: Personality, Learning Style and Strategies

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Purpose

To become familiar with the individual variables of personality, learning style and strategies and examine how to maximize this knowledge in the classroom to meet unit mission.

Outline

- Influence in language learning
- Definitions
- Personality
- Learning Style
- Learning Strategies
- Classroom Application
- Summary
- Recommendations
- Conclusion

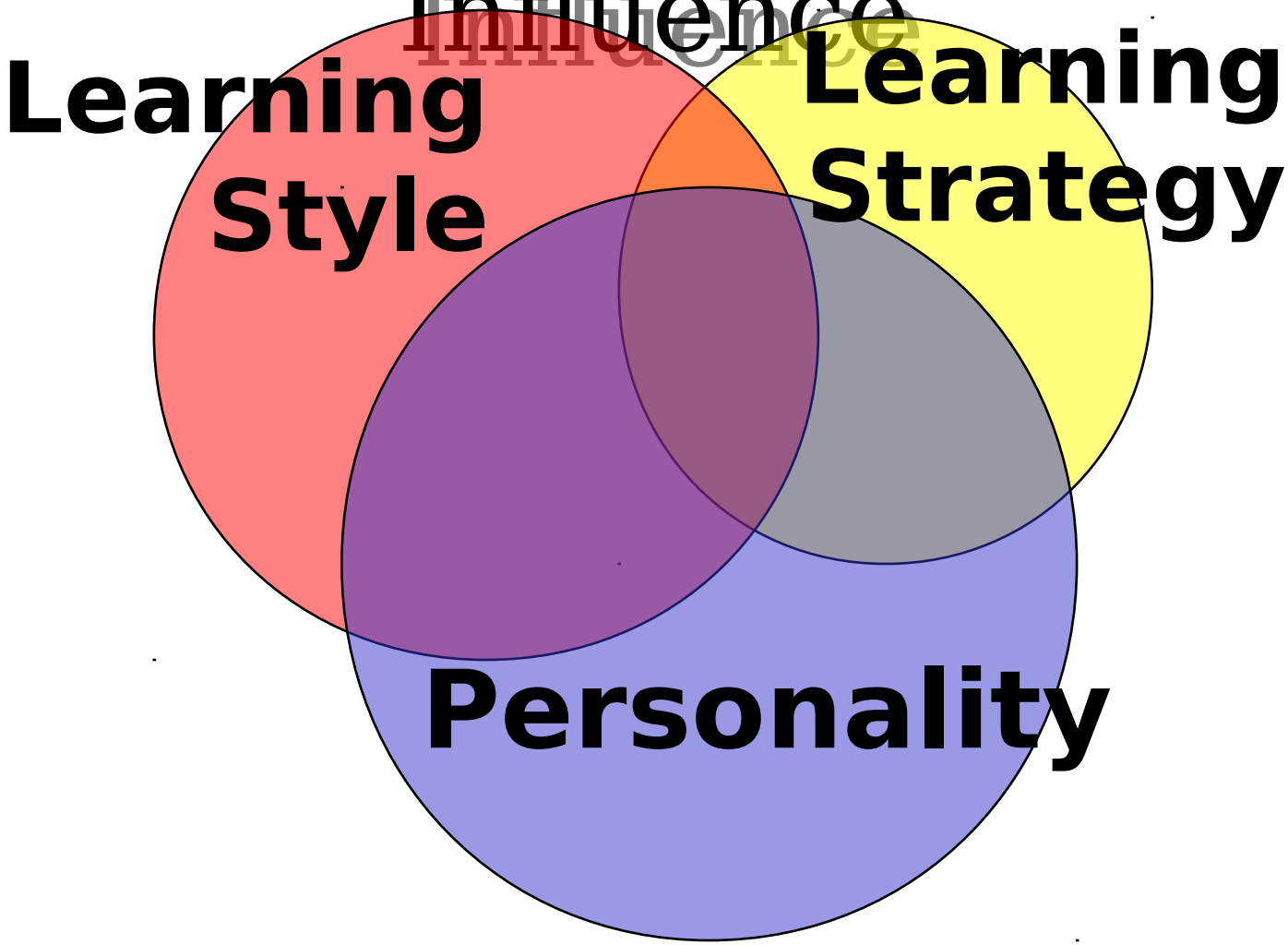
Influence

- Other-hand activity: (Moody, 1988)
  - Write the following items using the opposite hand from which you normally write.
  - Item 1: Complete Name, address, city, state, zip.
  - Item 2: Write one word **describing**
    - **How you feel writing** with that hand
    - **The quality** of your work.

Definitions

- **Personality:**
  - Psychological type (style) influences the way learners use strategies and how they progress in their language programming (Ehrman & Oxford, 1990).
- **Learning Styles:**
  - An individual's natural, habitual, and preferred way of absorbing, processing, and retaining new information and skills which persist regardless of teaching method or content area. (Kinsella, 1995)
- **Learning Strategies**
  - Often conscious steps or behaviors used by language learners to enhance the acquisition, storage, retention, recall, and use of the information (Ehrman & Oxford, 1990).

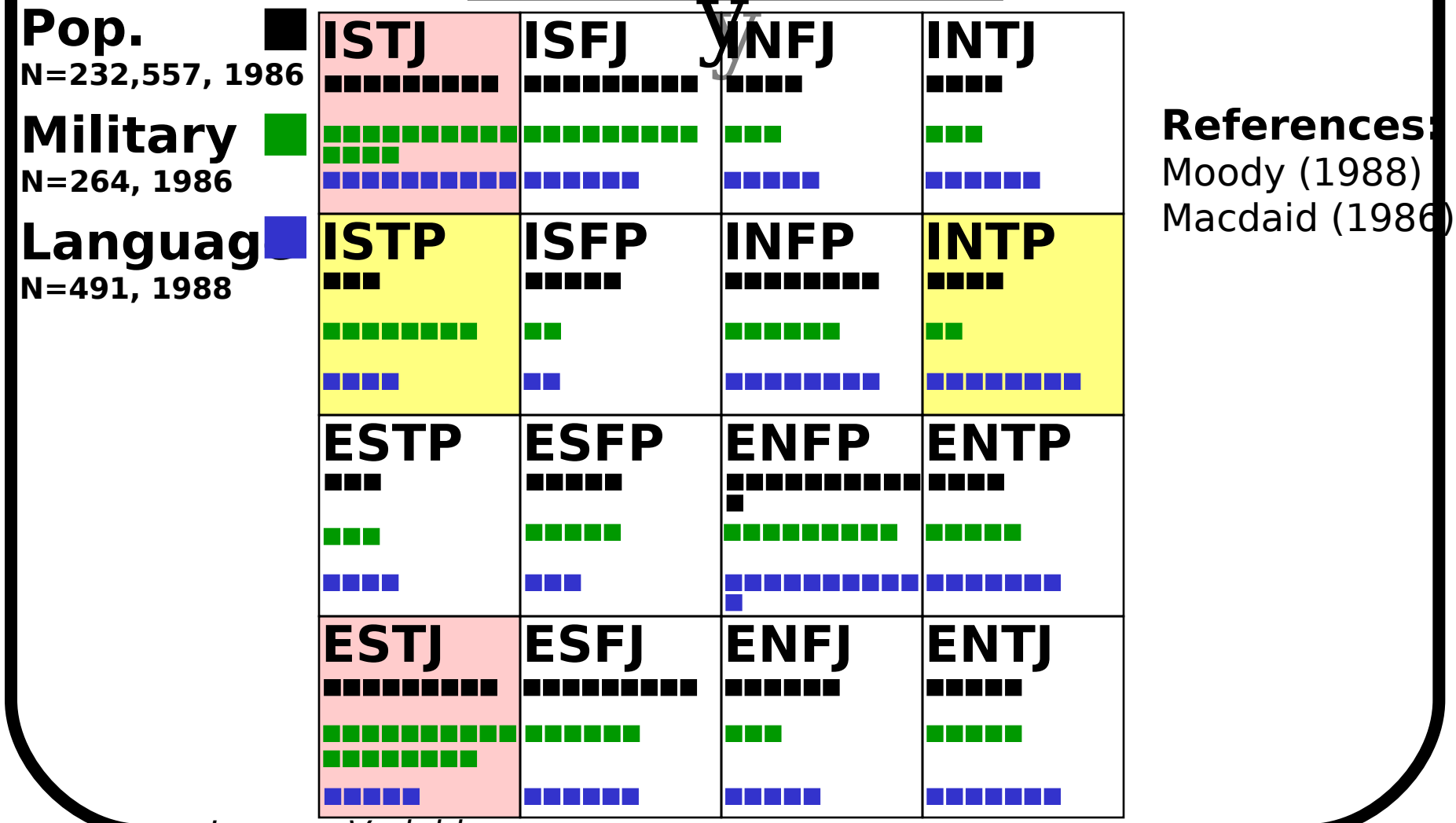
Overlapping Influence



Personality

- Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) 4-bipolar scale:
  - **E**xtrinsic vs. **I**ntrinsic: Attitudes or orientations of energy.
  - **S**ensitive vs. I**N**tuitive: Functions or processes of perception.
  - **T**hinking vs. **F**eeling: Functions or processes of judgment.
  - **J**udgment vs. **P**erception: Attitudes or orientations to the outer world.
- MBTI Form M became the standard version beginning in 1998 (Quenk, 2000) with expanded forms (Forms J and K published in 1987 and 1989 respectively). See your chaplain or ***http://www.capt.org/*** for more information.

Personalit



References:

Moody (1988)

Macdaid (1986)

Learner Variables

Personality

- Influence on Language Learning (Ehrman & Oxford, 1990)
  - Research data suggest some language learning advantages to Introverts, Intuitives, Feelers, and Perceivers.
  - Sensors, Thinkers, and Judgers were associated with somewhat weaker performances.

Personality

- Measurement Instruments (see your Chaplain)
  - MBTI (multiple forms available)
  - Strength Deployment Inventory (800-624-SDIS, e-mail: *mail@PersonalStrengths.com*)
  - Jackson Personality Inventory (Jackson, 1974)

Learning Styles

- Learning Styles—complicated and overlapping: (Kinsella, 1995)
  - Elements: environment, physical, emotional, sociological, psychological
  - Perceptual modalities: auditory, visual, tactile, kinesthetic
  - Hemispherity: left-brain, right-brain
  - Field sensitivity: field-independent, field-sensitivity

Learning Styles

- Elements
  - Environmental: light, sound, temperature, design structure.
  - Physical: perception, time, posture, mobility, intake (food).
  - Emotional: motivation, persistence, self-confidence.
  - Sociological: self-partner, team, mentor.
  - Psychological: left-/right-brain, analytic/relational, reflective/impulsive.
- Perceptual modalities:
  - Auditory: listening to instruction from lectures, tapes or small-group activities and discussions.
  - Visual: silent reading or even pictures, graphs, and diagrams.
  - Tactile: working with your hands, manipulating (writing, drawing, building models, lab experiment)

Learning Styles

- Hemispherity
  - Left-brain: Focuses on component parts, is analytic, linear, abstract (takes a small element to represent the whole), logical, temporal (sequencing one thing after another), verbal.
  - Right-brain: focuses on wholes, is relational (pattern seeking), global, concrete, intuitive, spatial (how parts relate to each other), and non-verbal.
- Field Sensitivity
  - Field-independent: perceives elements independently of a context or field.
  - Field-sensitive: more apt to perceive the whole visual field or situation rather than its discrete parts.
  - Common test is an Embedded Figures Test, where one attempts to identify a simple geometrical figure from within a complex figure.

Learning Styles

- Influence on Language Learning:
  - Higher achievers in language courses tend to like informal classrooms (design structure), are motivated, and prefer not to receive information via the kinesthetic mode. (Bailey, Onwuegbuzie, & Daley, 2000).
  - Learners can and must extend their stylistic “comfort zone” to learn more effectively. (Ehrman & Oxford, 1990, 1995)

Learning Styles

- Instruments
  - Style Analysis Survey (SAS): Assessing Your Own Learning and Working Styles (Oxford, 1993)
  - Style Orientation Scale for Language Learning (SOS-L) (DLI CLPM Manual)
  - Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire (Reid, 1984, as published in Reid, 1995)
  - The Learning Channel Preference Checklist (O'Brien, 1990 as published in Reid, 1995)
  - Second Language Tolerance of Ambiguity Scale (by Ely, C as published in Reid, 1995)
  - Kolb Learning Styles Inventory (Kolb, 1984)

Learning Strategies

- Taxonomy of Learning Strategies (Oxford, 1990):
  - Direct Strategies
    - Memory Strategies
    - Cognitive Strategies
    - Compensation Strategies
  - Indirect Strategies
    - Metacognitive
    - Affective
    - Social Strategies

Learning Strategies

- Influence on Language Learning:
  - More proficient learners appear to use a wider range in a greater number of situations than less proficient learners, but the relation between strategy use and proficiency is complex. (Ehrman & Oxford, 1990)
  - Effective learners use a variety of learning strategies appropriate to (a) the nature of the task, (b) the learning material, and (c) the individual's personality, goals, and stage of learning (Ehrman & Oxford, 1995).
  - Training on language learning strategies has a positive effect on learning. Students can stretch themselves beyond the strategies that are normally related to their own style-though it may be uncomfortable. (Ehrman & Oxford, 1990 and Nunan, 1996)

Learning Strategies

- Instruments
  - Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) (Oxford, 1990)
  - Perceptual Learning Preferences Survey (Kinsella, 1993 as published in Reid, 1995)
  - Productivity Environmental Preference survey (PEPS) by Dunn, Dunn, and Price (1991)
  - Teaching Styles Inventory (Excel, 1992)

Influence

- Other-hand activity:
  - Describing how you feel:
    - Unfamiliar, uncomfortable, tight, silly, awkward, frustrated, clumsy
  - The quality:
    - Inadequate, illegible, shaky, poor, indecipherable, unsatisfactory, junk.
  - How does this relate to language learning?

Classroom Application

Application

- Personality (Ehrman & Oxford, 1990)
  - Curriculum designers and lesson planners (teachers) should provide a variety of activities to accommodate all personality styles.
  - Extroverts:
    - Homework should be designed to break into 30 minute chunks to allow for social breaks in the study session.
  - Introverts:
    - Teachers should ensure the classroom environment is safe for language experimentation and that homework is well-planned.
  - Intuitives:
    - Prefer global processing opportunities and may be bored by concrete, step-by-step learning.

Classroom Application

Application

- Personality (Ehrman & Oxford, 1990)
  - Sensers:
    - Respond well to realistic, kinesthetic input in a no-nonsense course with clear goals in a sequential manner. Need to learn compensation strategies.
  - Feelers:
    - Prefer cooperative learning experiences, though the curriculum should be orderly and not overly structured. They enjoy a diversity of learning topics.
  - Judgers:
    - Enjoy a pre-structured syllabus (providing an orderly and predictable classroom).
  - Perceivers
    - Prefer to work in spurts of activity. Prefer flexibility within the course of study with opportunities to play with the language.

Classroom Application

Application

- Learning Style/Strategy:
  - Learn to recognize and attend to different learning styles. (Grace, 1998)
  - Train students in both the course material and the learning process. The student's perspective will change from a "drill and ceremonies" mentality to a communicative competence focus. (Nunan, 1996 and Defense)
  - Provide opportunities to develop a wider variety of strategies. (Moody, 1988)
  - Matching student cognitive style should result in more efficient learning, especially initially. (Hokanson, 2000a, 2000b)

Classroom Application

- Learning Style/Strategy (continued):
  - Unsuccessful learners may take time to recognize their weakness and develop strategies to compensate. (Ehrman & Oxford, 1990)
  - The use of cognitive strategies does positively correlate to success in a language learning environment. (Ehrman & Oxford, 1995)
  - Where there is a mis-match in learning/teaching style between instructor and student, there is a significant chance of problems. (Bailey et al., 2000 and Oxford, 2001)

Application Questions

- Classroom
  - Do you group by personality, learning style or strategy? Research suggests that students will perform better? (Hokanson, 2000a).
  - How do you tailor your course materials to facilitate individual variable accommodation?
- Unit Language Program
  - Does the curriculum support the influence of individual learning variables?
  - Is improving language skills important enough to provide the resources to maximize instruction and learning?
  - Are the skills required by your unit mission validly supported by the language maintenance curriculum?

Summary

- Success in language learning is influenced by many factors:
  - Linguistical difference of the languages
  - Type of instruction, methodology and resources
  - Individual learner variables:
    - Aptitude of learner
    - Personality
    - Learning style
    - Learning strategies
    - Age, and others
- Unit language programs need to work with these variables to make language learning and maintenance more efficient.

Recommendations

- Allocate sufficient resources to ensure your instructors incorporate the latest pedagogy and remain aware of the implications of second language acquisition research. Look to TESOL and other Education sources!
- If you need assistance, call DLI for a Field Assistance Visit, but have them answer a tough question (like one of these):
  - How can the unit better tailor the teaching, curriculum, and materials to the individual variables within the unit?
  - Does the unit's current teaching methodology and approach incorporate the most current lessons learned from the field of second language acquisition?
  - What adjustments to the curriculum are necessary to better enable the linguists to successfully accomplish their mission?

Conclusion

- On 2 June 1981, before the house of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, General Robert H. Barrow stated that “success in battle is not a function of how many show up, but who they are.” [and what languages they speak]
  - FMFM 1-0, p. 11